

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0043

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: INFORMAL SESSION WITH EASTERN REPS ON FEBRUARY
11, 1975

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN THE FEBRUARY 11 INFORMAL SESSION
OF THE VIENNA TALKS, THE ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED BY THE
CANADIAN REP, FRG REP AND US REP, AND THE EAST BY SOVIET
REPS SMIRNOVSKY AND SHUSTOV (KHLESTOV HAD STILL NOT
RETURNED FROM THE SOVIET UNION), POLISH REP STRULAK AND
CZECHOSLOVAK REP KLEIN (WHO PARTICIPATED FOR THE LAST
TIME IN AN INFORMAL SESSION OWING TO HIS REASSIGNMENT
TO PRAGUE EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 18). THE SESSION WAS CHARAC-
TERIZED BY AN ACTIVE EXCHANGE GOING BACK TO FUNDAMENTAL
ISSUES.

2. ALLIED REPS STRESSED CONFORMITY OF THE WESTERN APPROACH
WITH THE AGREED OBJECTIVES OF THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. THEY

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POINTED OUT THAT, IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, TWO MAIN TYPES OF

OBLIGATION WERE UNDER DISCUSSION, OBLIGATIONS TO REDUCE FORCES AND OBLIGATIONS TO LIMIT THE SIZE OF FORCES. THEY STATED THAT THE SECOND TYPE OF OBLIGATION WOULD HAVE A GREATER IMPACT ON WESTERN THAN ON EASTERN PARTICIPANTS BECAUSE A LARGER PROPORTION OF NATO THAN OF WARSAW PACT FORCES IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS BELONGED TO COUNTRIES ALL OF WHOSE TERRITORY WOULD BE COVERED BY LIMITATIONS, WHEREAS THE TOTAL SIZE OF SOVIET FORCES, THE LARGEST FORCE ON THE WARSAW PACT SIDE, WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO SUCH LIMITATION. ALLIED REPS SAID IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO TAKE THIS IMBALANCE IN OBLIGATIONS INTO ACCOUNT IN CALCULATING REDUCTIONS. THEY POINTED OUT THAT, IN OPPOSING COLLECTIVE CEILINGS, THE EAST WAS IN EFFECT CLAIMING A RIGHT TO DETERMINE THE INTERNAL RELATIONSHIP AMONG THE INTEGRATED FORCES OF THE NATO DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. ALLIED REPS DREW ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT THE WARSAW PACT CLAIM THAT THE PACT REDUCTION APPROACH WAS MORE SPECIFIC THAN THE WESTERN APPROACH WAS WITHOUT FOUNDATION; THE EASTERN PROPOSAL FORESAW REDUCTIONS BY EQUAL PERCENTAGES OF FORCE TOTALS WHOSE SPECIFICS THE EAST REFUSED TO DISCUSS. THE EAST WAS IN EFFECT MAKING PRIOR WESTERN ACCEPTANCE OF THE EASTERN REDUCTION APPROACH A PRECONDITION FOR DISCUSSION OF THE NUMERICAL CONTENT OF THE EASTERN REDUCTION PROPOSAL AND OF DATA IN GENERAL.

3. EASTERN REPS REPEATEDLY CHARGED THAT THE ALLIES WERE SEEKING TO CHANGE THE OVERALL EAST-WEST FORCE RELATIONSHIP IN THE AREA THROUGH THE ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS IN GROUND FORCES THEY HAD PROPOSED. EASTERN REPS ALSO STRESSED THE POINTS THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO COVER ALL FORCE ELEMENTS IN THE AREA, INCLUDING AIR FORCES AND NUCLEAR FORCES, IN REDUCTIONS AND THAT EACH PARTICIPANT SHOULD HAVE TO ASSUME CLEAR OBLIGATIONS AS TO THE TIME AND AMOUNT OF ITS REDUCTIONS BEFORE ANY REDUCTIONS TOOK PLACE. THEY ALSO INSISTED THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT, ONCE IT REDUCED ITS FORCES, MUST ASSUME AN EFFECTIVE COMMITMENT NOT TO INCREASE ITS FORCES. THEY PLACED HEAVY EMPHASIS ON FRG REDUCTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSION OF THESE TOPICS.

4. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS BY ALLIED REPS, EASTERN REPS SAID THAT THE PROTOCOL SPECIFYING AGREED REDUCTIONS ENVISAGED
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IN THE EASTERN PROPOSAL WOULD CONTAIN THE NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF THE UNITS TO BE REDUCED AND THAT THE TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT PROPER WOULD SPECIFY THE AGREED PERCENTAGE OF REDUCTIONS, THUS MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO CALCULATE BOTH THE STARTING POINT OF REDUCTIONS AND RESIDUAL LEVELS. EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES ONCE MORE ARGUED THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD UNDERTAKE "EQUIVALENT" OBLIGATIONS.

5. EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES RETURNED TO THE EASTERN FREEZE PROPOSAL AT THE END OF THE SESSION, BUT ONLY IN A RATHER PRO FORMA WAY. IN RESPONSE, WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES STATED THAT THE ALLIES DID NOT WISH TO CONTRACTUALIZE EXISTING GROUND FORCE DISPARITIES IN THE AREA. TO AGREE TO A SEPARATE NON-INCREASE COMMITMENT WOULD MEAN TO FORMALLY RELINQUISH THE WESTERN RIGHT TO ACT TO RECTIFY THESE DISPARITIES BEFORE THE EAST HAD GIVEN THE WEST THE ASSURANCE THE WEST REQUIRED THAT THE EAST WAS WILLING TO MOVE TOWARD ELIMINATING THEM. EASTERN REPS DID NOT REPEAT NOT ON THIS OCCASION REVERT TO THE CLAIMS THEY HAD RAISED IN THE INFORMAL SESSION OF FEBRUARY 4 THAT THE US AND FRG INTENDED TO INCREASE THEIR FORCES. AS HE HAS IN RECENT BILATERAL CONVERSATION, SMIRNOVSKY PUT MAIN EMPHASIS ON THE EASTERN DRAFT AGREEMENT BUT ALSO GAVE SLIGHTLY MORE ATTENTION TO THE EASTERN FIRST STEP PROPOSAL THAN HAS BEEN THE CASE SINCE THE SOVIETS STARTED PUSHING THEIR FREEZE PROPOSAL. IT IS TOO EARLY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THIS FACT HAS GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE OR IS PERSONAL TO SMIRNOVSKY.

6. IT WAS AGREED TO HOLD THE NEXT INFORMAL SESSION ON FEBRUARY 18. END SUMMARY.

REMAINDER OF REPORT BEING SENT VIA AIRGRAM.DEAN

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